dents would support, to their best ability, your efforts, no doubt they would be attended with satisfactory results. Your obedient servant,

Saturday evening, May 13, 1843. P. P.

You should have my humble assistance in the good work.

Our correspondent must have observed an anxiety to set about the "good work" he mentions, and his proffered assistance is a part of that which we have been almost entreating should be tendered to us. We put our hands to the bargain, and at once assign him his niche in THE BUILDER—let him occupy it as soon as he likes, with our best honour and welcome.—Ed.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE BUILDER.

SIR,—My attention was more particularly directed by an advertisement in your last number to an evil which has long infested my profession, and which I think loudly calls for the severest censure. The advertisement to which I allude offers to public competition the design required for erecting a new prison in the town of Leeds. The magistracy of that borough, or whoever else have the management of the matter, state that they want "a complete set of plans, sections, elevations, and explanatory drawings, together with a general specification of the manner of executing the works, *and sufficient for contracting for the same, and estimate of the cost in detail*;" and after holding forth the munificent prizes of 150*l.* for the best plan, and 70*l.* for the second best, they propose, with all possible complacency, that all plans they may deign to approve, "*be held as the property of the council*," but that this same liberal-minded body "WILL NOT BIND THEMSELVES TO EMPLOY THE PERSON WHOSE PLANS OBTAIN EITHER THE FIRST OR SECOND PRIZE"—the plain meaning of which is (if indeed it require any interpretation) that these worthy Leeds contractors, instead of honestly paying an architect the remuneration fairly due to him, for the exercise of his skill and labour, seek to obtain the most valuable fruits of both *for less than one-tenth* of the recompense he is entitled to; his commission, were he in the regular course of practice, to design and superintend the work, amounting to 1,800*l.* at the least upon the proposed outlay of 30,000*l.* Nor need I remind you, Sir, what indeed is evident to any one, that the invention of a design is by far the principal and most meritorious part of his labour, that the remainder is simply mechanical, and that in fact, upon the completion of his plans, sections, and specification, he is considered to have earned a good two-thirds of his whole commission. And yet in this instance, the intention of the parties, boldly avowed, and apparently without the desire of concealment, is to procure, at a mean and paltry cost, plans, &c. sufficiently explicit and accurate to enable them to carry them out without any further intervention of, and consequently without any further remuneration to, the architect whatever. Now, Sir, I would ask you, or any indifferent person, whether such a proposition is worthy of the public, and I would fain think respectable, body from which it emanates? It is true that every one, whether acting for himself or as a trustee for others, is justified in procuring what he stands in need of, with certain limitations, at the lowest possible rate. But there are undoubtedly limits which the conscientious and fair-dealing man would scruple to pass. He would not be anxious, were either his honour or patriotism in any tolerable vigour, to purchase articles in the importation of which the revenue of his country, legally constituted, had been defrauded. Let it not be mistaken that I put this as a parallel case, I mean nothing of the kind; my only object is to illustrate what I have advanced; but I shall not shrink from avowing my decided opinion that individuals, whether acting separately or collectively, are clearly overstepping the bounds, I will not say of honest, but at all events of honourable dealing, when they hold forth an inducement which they must know will only be seized by men either of little experience, of low principle, or whose "poverty and not their will" prompts them to compete—an inducement to degrade the liberal profession, of which they are members. But, Sir, the radical cure of this growing evil clearly rests with the profession itself. Were such paltry offers completely neglected, were they treated with the contempt they so well merit, they would soon cease to be made. And my main object in addressing you is to point out the mischief, which young practitioners especially, and by far the greater part of them I am convinced from thoughtless inadvertence, are ultimately, if not immediately, inflicting on their profession, and consequently on themselves, by competing on such degrading terms. A young architect just entering into practice, with a laudable ambition to excel and gain a reputation, often embarks upon an undertaking of this character, without thinking of, or caring for, the amount of remuneration; supposing, and in one view justly, that success in obtaining a work of public notoriety forms its own reward. It is to my younger brethren more particularly that I would, in all kindness and good feeling, point out the deleterious effects of conduct originally springing from high and pure motives. Let it not be imagined that I am opposed to public competition; when properly conducted, I consider it the best, if not the only, means of eliciting genuine talent; and it is only when based upon low and degrading principles that I should think of raising my voice against it.

Were it not for extending my remarks to an unreasonable length, I could adduce several instances which have come within my own knowledge of the injurious effects of the practice upon which I have been commenting. I have frequently known designs furnished for churches, with all the exactness requisite to their being fully carried out, for a premium much *less than one-third* of the architect's commission; and about ten months ago, a gentleman who called upon myself respecting a house he contemplated erecting, upon inquiring my charge were it placed in my hands, exclaimed with surprise, "Why, a design was furnished to such a public building, of which I was one of the superintending committee, for which a premium of only 25*l.* was awarded, and you now want me to pay more than 100*l.* for a building of not one-sixth its value. I cannot give it to you."

Here, Sir, you see the drift to which these things are tending; and if they go on unnoticed and unchecked, we may expect to see a 10*l.* premium offered for complete designs, &c., of a building that costs 10,000*l.*, and our fair and honest remuneration most materially reduced, if not altogether cut off.

I would hope that the subject may attract the attention and interference of others more able and influential than myself; and trusting that you will be able to find room in your valuable publication for the imperfect remarks I have offered in a matter so important,

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

JUSTITIA.

London, May 11th, 1843.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE BUILDER.

SIR,—In reference to the competition for the Town Hall, Colchester, which you favoured your readers with a view of in a late number, it would interest myself, and I have no doubt many others, if yourself or any of your readers could afford any information upon the following queries; viz.—

First. Were six or any other number of the designs selected by the committee, and was a professional gentleman called in to give his opinion thereon? and who was he?

Second. Did that gentleman set aside the whole six so selected, and select three from the whole number, there being three premiums, none of which designs was included in the original six?

Third. Did the author of the design so selected for the first premium distinguish his drawings by his *crest*, and is he a friend of the referee, or was the crest known to him?

Fourth. You mention a second competition, was it publicly advertised as the first one, and what circumstances gave rise to it? Is the design now about to be carried into execution that which was originally selected with the *crest*, and what became of the premiums?

As there were about seventy-three designs sent, in the original competition, the quiet way in which it was conducted, for no application for official information met with success, together with the whole proceedings being ultimately upset, by what one gleans from various sources, for until I read it in THE BUILDER, I was not aware of any second competition, or of the name of the successful party, it would be very desirable, in case there are others of the competitors in the same unenlightened state, to have some information on the subject. I have a very great desire for it, and remain, Sir, I fancy,

ONE OF THE ORIGINAL SIX.

16th May, 1843.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE BUILDER.

SIR,—Would you favour a young aspirant to science by a solution of the following question:

If four horses can draw a ton along a level road, how much will they draw, with the same ease, up a hill which rises 1 yard in 40? W. J. P.

So far from such inquiries being obtrusive, we hail them as the best evidences of the right working of our plans—they stimulate inquiry and turn the studies of practical men in a right direction.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE BUILDER.

SIR,—I take this opportunity of enrolling myself in the drawing school you are so nobly founding. I appeal to all young workmen not to let this opportunity pass by, for if neglected they may never have the opportunity again. I feel satisfied you will not stop at twenty, nay, nor at five times that number. Wishing you every success, I remain yours, J. H. S.

May 3, 1843.

Miscellanea.

DESTRUCTION OF GREENWICH PIER.—The confident prediction that this costly building would crumble to pieces in a short time, from the return of the spring tide, after the injury detailed in this paper of yesterday, unfortunately proved correct. At about 11 o'clock on Tuesday night, just as the tide was rising, another tremendous crash was heard, which was at once attributed to the bursting of the piles in front of the pier. As soon as daylight appeared, boats were put out to see the extent of damage; and the appearance the pier then presented shewed a great extent of injury, and left not the slightest hope of saving any portion. Pile after pile of ponderous timber, bound with iron, and fixed at the foundation in massive plates of iron, had been split and shivered, some falling inwards and others outwards, whilst the Parade gave way in every direction, the fissures extending nearly the whole length, and the plates of iron being shivered like glass. It is now, therefore, scarcely safe for any person to go on the pier, as the only remaining stairs leading to the floating barges have exhibited symptoms of dilapidation: and the whole of the frontage wall and iron railings must ultimately give way, and probably dash the barges to pieces, perhaps momentarily. The eastern end, near Ship Dock and the Royal Hospital, is opening in fissures, and is likely to burst away in that direction. It is quite impossible to stay the damage: the whole must be left to its fate, and be washed down by the tides, where the greater part of at least 10,000 tons, &c., which has been laid in between the wall and the road to form the Parade, will also be washed away. The present appearance of this extensive pier is as if an earthquake had shivered it. Masonry and timbers are lying about, or leaning in every direction.—*Times, May 18.*

THE SUSSEX MEMORIAL.—We have authority for announcing that a most influential meeting of noblemen and gentlemen will shortly be held at the Freemasons' Tavern, to adopt measures for calling a public meeting for the purpose of erecting, by public subscription, a suitable memorial in remembrance of his late Royal Highness the much-lamented Duke of Sussex. A provisional committee has already been formed. Measures were taken to originate the meeting so early as the first instant. We have no doubt the undertaking will meet with a warm and cordial response on the part of the public.—*Globe.*

COST OF RAILWAYS.—Below is a comparative return of the length and cost of construction of the following railway lines:—

Designation.	Length	Cost.
Birmingham and Derby	38¾	1,030,000
Birmingham and Gloucester	55	1,329,300
Canterbury and Whitstable	6	80,000
Dublin and Kingstown	6	303,724
Edinburgh and Glasgow	46	1,200,000
Great Northern	45	1,300,000
Great Western	117¼	4,503,160
Hull and Selby	8¼	369,589
Leeds and Selby	20	340,000
Liverpool and Manchester	30¼	1,407,172
London and Birmingham	112¼	5,698,375
London and Blackwall	3¼	643,343
London and Brighton	42¼	1,300,000
London and Croydon	8¾	685,159
London and Greenwich	3¾	668,280
London and South Western	76¼	2,054,386
Manchester and Birmingham	29¼	895,914
Manchester and Leeds	49¾	2,113,988
Midland Counties	57¾	1,257,811
South Eastern	69	1,850,000

ST. THOMAS'S CHURCH.—This church is closed for repair. The contemplated works are a restoration of the groined roof and east end of the chancel to its original condition, with the entire and thorough repair of the external roof of the chancel, and the restoration of the stone parapet instead of the present projecting eaves—the erection of several new pews at the west end, instead of the unsightly lobby which now occupies so large a space and forms only a loitering place for idle people. The church will be cleaned throughout, and that most important point, a proper ventilation, in which the church is now so extremely defective, will be attained. The works will be done by Messrs. Hendy, of Portsmouth, under the superintendence of T. E. Owen, Esq., and of — Herbert, Esq., of London, the architect to Winchester College. Besides this the organ will be thoroughly repaired, and its different parts, which have been added at different times, will be completely harmonised.—*Hampshire Advertiser.*

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